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RESEARCH OUTLINE

Mississippi

FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY™
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

This outline describes major sources of information about families from Mississippi. As you read this outline, study the *United States Research Outline* (30972), which will help you understand terminology and the contents and uses of genealogical records.

RECORDS OF THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY™

The Family History Library has some of the records listed in this outline. The major holdings include census, court, land and property, marriage, military, and probate records.

Some of the sources described in this outline list the Family History Library's book, microfilm, and microfiche numbers. These are preceded by FHL, the abbreviation for *Family History Library*. These numbers may be used to locate materials in the Family History Library and to order microfilm and microfiche at Family History Centers™.

FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY CATALOG™

The library's records are listed in the Family History Library Catalog™ found at the Family History Library and at each Family History Center™. To find a record, look in the locality section of the Family History Library Catalog for:

- The *place* where your ancestor lived, such as:

  UNITED STATES - VITAL RECORDS
  MISSISSIPPI - COURT RECORDS
  MISSISSIPPI, ADAMS - LAND AND PROPERTY
  MISSISSIPPI, ADAMS, NATCHEZ - CHURCH RECORDS

- The *record type* you want to search, such as:

  UNITED STATES - ***VITAL RECORDS***
  MISSISSIPPI - ***COURT RECORDS***
  MISSISSIPPI, ADAMS - ***LAND AND PROPERTY***
  MISSISSIPPI, ADAMS, NATCHEZ - ***CHURCH RECORDS***

The section headings in this outline match the names of record types used in the Family History Library Catalog.

ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES

The following archives, libraries, and societies have collections or services helpful to genealogical researchers.

- Mississippi Department of Archives and History
  100 South State Street
  P.O. Box 571
  Jackson, MS 39201
  Telephone: 601-359-6850
  Telephone: 601-359-6975

  A useful guide to their collection is Thomas W. Henderson and Ronald E. Tomlin, comps., *Guide to Official Records in the Mississippi Department of Archives and History* (Jackson, Miss.: Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1975; FHL book 976.2 A3h).

- National Archives—Southeast Region (Atlanta)
  1557 St. Joseph Avenue
  East Point, GA 30344-2593
  Telephone: 404-763-7477
  Fax: 404-763-7033

- Mississippi Genealogical Society
  P.O. Box 5301
  Jackson, MS 39216

- Evans Memorial Library
  105 North Long Street
  Aberdeen, MS 39730
  Telephone: 601-369-4601
  Fax: 601-369-2971

- Mississippi State University-Mitchel Memorial Special Collections-Genealogical Library
  P.O. Box 5408
  Mississippi State, MS 39762
  Telephone: 601-325-7679
  Fax: 601-325-3560

- University of Southern Mississippi
  McCain Library and Archives
  P.O. Box 5148
  Hattiesburg, MS 39406-5148
  Telephone: 601-266-4345
  Fax: 601-266-4409

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To learn more about the history and record-keeping systems of Mississippi counties, use the nine inventories of county archives published by the Historical Records Survey around 1940. The Family

History Library has copies of most of these inventories.

Another helpful guide to Mississippi county records is *Survey of Records in Mississippi Court Houses* (Jackson, Miss.: Mississippi Genealogical Society, 1957; FHL book 976.2 P2m; fiche 6100939).

Computer Networks and Bulletin Boards

Computers with modems can be useful tools for obtaining information from selected archives and libraries. In a way, computer networks themselves serve as a library. The Internet, certain computer bulletin boards, and commercial on-line services help family history researchers:

- Locate other researchers
- Post queries
- Send and receive e-mail
- Search large databases
- Search computer libraries
- Join in computer chat and lecture sessions

You can find computerized research tips and information about ancestors from Mississippi in a variety of sources at local, state, national, and international levels. The list of sources is growing rapidly. Most of the information is available at no cost.

Addresses on the Internet change frequently. As of April 1997, the following sites are important gateways linking you to many more network and bulletin board sites:

- USGenWeb
  http://www.usgenweb.com/
  A cooperative effort by many volunteers to list genealogical databases, libraries, bulletin boards, and other resources available on the Internet for each county, state, and country.
- Roots-L
  http://www.rootsweb.com/roots-l/usa/
  A useful list of sites and resources. Includes a large, regularly-updated research coordination list.

For further details about using computer networks, bulletin boards, and news groups for family history research, see the *United States Research Outline* (30972), 2nd ed., "Archives and Libraries" section.

FamilySearch®

The Family History Library and some Family History Centers have computers with FamilySearch®. FamilySearch is a collection of computer files containing several million names. FamilySearch is a good place to begin your research. Some of the records come from compiled sources; some have been automated from original sources.

Computers with FamilySearch do *not* have access to computer on-line services, networks, or bulletin boards. However, those services are available at many public libraries, college libraries, and private locations.

BIBLE RECORDS

A large collection of Bible records is *Mississippi Cemetery and Bible Records,* 22 vols. (Jackson, Miss.: Mississippi Genealogical Society, 1954-1983; FHL book 976.2 V3m; vols. 1-13 on films 496623-26; vols. 1-19 on fiche 6051105).

Additional Bible records are in the *Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Collection* described in the "Genealogy" section of this outline. An index to the Bible records in the DAR collection is E. Kay Kirkham, *An Index to Some of the Bibles and Family Records of the Southern States* (Logan, Utah: Everton Publishers, 1984; FHL book Ref 973 D22kk v.1; fiche 6089183).

BIOGRAPHY

Extensive collections of biographical material are at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History, University of Mississippi, and University of Southern Mississippi. There is no major statewide biographical index or major manuscript collection. You may wish to search the biographical sections of statewide, regional, and county histories. Representative biographical encyclopedias are:

Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Mississippi. 2 vols. in 4. Chicago: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1891. (FHL book 976.2 D3b; film 845437 items 2,-39.) An index to the 25,000 names in this work is also available at the Family History Library and is on the microfilm with the book. For an abstract of this book see Norman E. Gillis, *Genealogical Abstract of Biographical Section. Alphabetical Arrangement A-Z (of) Biographical and Historical Memoirs of Mississippi* (N.p. 1962: FHL book 976.2 D38b).

Rowland, Dunbar. *Mississippi.* 4 vols. 1907. Reprint, Spartanburg, S.C.: The Reprint Co., 1976. (FHL book 976.2 H2m; fiche 6051432; film 1421829 items 4-7.) Volumes 3 and 4 are biographical.

CEMETERIES

The *Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Collection* contains tombstone inscriptions from many Mississippi cemeteries. This collection is described in the "Genealogy" section of this outline.

Another major collection of inscriptions is described in the "Bible Records" section of this outline.

CENSUS

Federal

Many federal census records are found at the Family History Library, the National Archives, and other federal and state archives. The *United States Research Outline* provides more detailed information about these records.

The Family History Library has the U.S. federal censuses of Mississippi from 1820 to 1920, however, the 1830 census for Pike County and the 1860 census for Sunflower and Washington counties are missing.

The 1890 census has been destroyed. The 1890 Union veterans schedule and index are available at the Family History Library and at the National Archives.

Statewide indexes are available for the 1820, 1830, 1840, 1850, 1860, and 1870 censuses. Soundex (phonetic) indexes are available on microfilm for part of the 1880 and all of the 1900, 1910, and 1920 censuses.

Mortality schedules for 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 are at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Indexes to the 1850, 1860, and 1870 schedules are available at the Family History Library.

Territorial and State

Territorial and state censuses were taken at frequent intervals between 1792 and 1866 for various counties. Few are complete and the information in the censuses varies. For example, maiden names are included in the 1792 census. These censuses are available at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and at the Family History Library (FHL film 899868-870).

For an index covering the years 1792 to 1816, see Norman E. Gillis, *Early Inhabitants of the Natchez District* (Baton Rouge: N.E. Gillis, 1963; FHL book 976.2 X2p). This includes a list of residents in 1810.

Published indexes are available for the surviving censuses for the years 1810, 1820-25, 1830/37, 1840/41, and 1845. For a more detailed discussion of early census records see the article by Lackey cited in the "For Further Reading" section of this outline.

CHURCH RECORDS

Before 1900 the largest religious groups in Mississippi were the Baptist and the Methodist Episcopal (now United Methodist) churches. The Family History Library has a few original church records for Mississippi, including some Baptist and Presbyterian documents. However, the records of these major denominations seldom include birth, marriage, and death dates.

Some denominations have collected their records into central repositories. You can write to the following addresses to learn where their records are located:

Baptist

Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission
Mississippi College Library
P.O. Box 51
Clinton, MS 39060
Telephone: 601-925-3434
Fax: 601-925-3435

The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives
901 Commerce Street #400
Nashville, TN 37203-3630
Telephone: 615-244-0344
Fax: 615-782-4821

Histories of the Baptists include:

Griffin, Benjamin. *History of the Primitive Baptists of Mississippi.* 1853. Reprint, Jonesboro, Ark: Sammons Printing, 1958. (FHL book 976.2 K2g.)

Schilling, T.C. *Abstract History of the Mississippi Baptist Association, 1806-1906.* New Orleans: N.p., 1908. (FHL film 1036195.)

Methodist

J.B. Cain Archives of Mississippi Methodism
Millsaps-Wilson Library
Millsaps College
1701 North State Street
Jackson, MS 39210
Telephone: 601-974-1073
Fax: 601-974-1082

Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church
36 Madison Avenue
P.O. Box 127
Madison, NJ 07940
Telephone: 201-408-3590
Fax: 201-408-3909

A helpful history is J. Allen Lindsey, *Methodism in the Mississippi Conference* (Jackson, Miss.: Hawkins Foundation, Mississippi Conference Historical Society, 1964; FHL book 976.2 K2L).

COURT RECORDS

Major Mississippi courts that kept records of genealogical value were as follows:

Justice of the peace courts are countywide courts that have records of minor civil and criminal cases.

County courts have jurisdiction with the circuit courts over misdemeanors, appeals from other courts, and some law and equity cases.

Chancery courts are countywide courts that keep records of cases involving equity, divorce, land grants, probate, and guardianship.

Circuit courts are countywide courts that have records of minor civil cases, bastardy, felonies, and appeals from justices of the peace, and municipality and county courts. This court has had exclusive jurisdiction over felonies.

The Family History Library has copies of many of the county, chancery, and circuit court records. For example, the library has Hinds County court records from about 1850 to 1910. From the Mississippi Department of Archives and History the library has territorial land and court records for 1798 to 1817 (FHL films 904447-51).

For more information about court procedures and records see:

Survey of Records in Mississippi Court Houses. Jackson, Miss.: Mississippi Genealogical Society, 1967. (FHL book 976.2 P2m; fiche 6100939.)

Hendrix, Mary L. *Mississippi Court Records: From the Files of the High Court of Errors and Appeals, 1799-1859.* Jackson, Miss.: N.p. 1950. (FHL book 976.2 P2h.)

McBee, May Wilson. *The Natchez Court Records . . . 1767-1805.* Greenwood, Miss.: M. W. McBee, 1953. (FHL book 976.2 P2mm.)

DIRECTORIES

Directories of heads of households have been published for major cities in Mississippi. For example, the Family History Library has 1860 city directories for Vicksburg (FHL book 976.226/N1 E4p; 1860, 1906-1935; FHL films 1841749-; fiche 6044616 for 1860). Local historical societies and public and university libraries usually have collections of city directories.

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

Most pre-statehood settlers of Mississippi came from the older Southern states along the Atlantic seaboard. Some came from New England and a few colonial French families settled in the Biloxi area. Most of the settlers, however, were of Ulster Scottish, English, and northern European ancestry. Blacks outnumbered whites in Mississippi from the middle of the nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth. Most of the Indians were gone by the late 1830s, but there are still a few thousand Choctaws living in east central Mississippi.

The earliest European settlers came by ship to the Gulf Coast. A few early American settlers also came this way, but most of them came overland via the Natchez Trace, which ran from Memphis, Tennessee to Natchez, Mississippi. Others came from Athens, Georgia and traveled westward through the Tombigbee River settlements of Alabama.

Major ports of entry to Mississippi have been Biloxi, Gulfport, and Pascagoula. No passenger lists are available for Biloxi. The Family History Library and the National Archives have the passenger lists of Gulfport for 1904 to 1954 and of Pascagoula for 1903 to 1935. Passenger lists for other ports, especially New Orleans, should be consulted. More detailed information on immigration sources is in the *United States Research Outline.*

Helpful studies of Mississippi history, genealogy, and immigration are found in Cyril Edward Cain, *Four Centuries on the Pascagoula,* 2 vols. (State College, Mississippi: C.E. Cain, 1953-1962; FHL book 976.21 H2c).

GAZETTEERS

Although there are no statewide gazetteers available, many local histories give information on place names. The names of small villages and towns are listed in Bruce C. Oakley, *A Postal History of Mississippi - Stampless Period, 1799-1860* (Baldwyn, Miss.: Magnolia Publishers, 1969; FHL book 976.2 E8o).

GENEALOGY

Most archives, historical societies, and genealogical societies have special collections and indexes of genealogical value. These must usually be searched in person.

Manuscript Collections

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Collection. This collection consists of transcripts of Bible, cemetery, church, marriage, death, obituary, and will records. It was microfilmed in 1971 at the DAR Library in Washington, D.C., and is on 20

microfilms at the Family History Library (FHL films 868497—). The volumes are generally arranged by county and many have individual indexes.

Mississippi Provincial Archives. Many colonial records for the lower Mississippi Valley were placed in archives in France, Spain, and England. These include correspondence about military and governmental affairs, some censuses, birth and burial registers, land grants, and surveys. Many of these records were transcribed by Dunbar Rowland and collected in a set of manuscript volumes known as the *Mississippi Provincial Archives.* This collection is at the Mississippi Department of History and Archives and on microfilm at the Family History Library. It includes:

- Records of the French Dominion, 1612 to 1763 (FHL films 899957-71), and the English Dominion, 1763 to 1783 (FHL films 899981-85) (listed in the FHLC under MISSISSIPPI - HISTORY - SOURCES).
- Records of the Spanish Dominion, 1757 to 1820 (FHL films 899972-80) (listed in the FHLC under MISSISSIPPI - ARCHIVES AND LIBRARIES - INVENTORIES, REGISTERS, CATALOGS).

Published Collection

Johnson, Charles Owen, ed. *The Order of the First Families of Mississippi 1699-1817: 1981 Register.* Ann Arbor, Mich.: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1981. (FHL book 976.2 D2o.)

HISTORY

The following important events in the history of Mississippi affected political boundaries, record keeping, and family movements.

1699 The French established a settlement called Fort Maurepas on Biloxi Bay.

1716 Fort Rosalie, now Natchez, was established by the French on the Mississippi River.

1763 France ceded its claims to the Mississippi region to Great Britain.

1783 Britain ceded the Gulf Coast area to Spain. The rest of the Mississippi region was claimed by Georgia. The boundary was in dispute until 1795, when it was set at the 31st parallel, about sixty miles north of the coast.

1789-1794 The Georgia legislature authorized the Yazoo land sales. Hundreds of people moved from the Atlantic Coast states to the Mississippi area.

1798 Congress organized the Mississippi Territory. Georgia abandoned claims to the northern portion in 1802, and the Gulf Coast portion was acquired from Spain during the War of 1812.

1817 The eastern part of the Mississippi Territory was organized as the Territory of Alabama. Mississippi became a state.

1861 Mississippi seceded from the Union. It was readmitted in 1870.

Helpful sources for studying the history of Mississippi are:

Rowland, Dunbar. *History of Mississippi, the Heart of the South.* 2 vols. Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1925. (FHL book 976.2 H2r; films 1000271, 844829-30; fiche 6051499-50.)

Rowland, Dunbar. *Mississippi, Comprising Sketches of Counties, Towns, Events, Institutions, and Persons.* 4 vols. 1907. Reprint. Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Co., 1976. (FHL book 976.2 H2m; film 1421829 items 4-7; fiche 6051432-5.)

LAND AND PROPERTY

Pre-territorial settlers acquired their land from France, Great Britain, and Spain. When Mississippi became a United States territory, there were many disputes over the earlier land claims. The records created in resolving these land disputes are found in the *American State Papers,* Class 8 and 9, which are on microfilm at the Family History Library. Lists of the names in these papers are in:

McMullin, Phillip, ed. *Grassroots of America . . .* Salt Lake City: Gendex Corp., 1972. (FHL book 973 R2ag index; fiche 6051323.)

First Settlers of the Mississippi Territory. Nacogdoches, Tex.: Ericson Books, n.d. (FHL book 976 R2f; film 1421793 item 22; fiche 6051448.)

Names of early settlers are also in the *Natchez Court Records* described in the "Court Records" section of this outline.

Mississippi then became a public-domain state in which land was distributed through U.S. general land offices (the earliest of which opened in 1807), and several state land offices (which opened in 1892).

Federal land case files are kept in the National Archives. Patents and copies of tract books and township plats are at:

Bureau of Land Management
Eastern States Office
7450 Boston Boulevard
Springfield, VA 22153
Telephone: 703-440-1600
Fax: 703-440-1599

These federal files are indexed on FHL compact disc no. 9 pt. 255. Territorial and state land records are at the Mississippi Land Commissioner's office in Jackson.

The Family History Library has copies of Mississippi territorial land and court records for the years 1798 to 1817 (FHL films 904447-51). These are arranged alphabetically by surname.

After original title to the land was granted, deeds, mortgages, and subsequent transactions have been recorded in county offices. In Mississippi, county land records have been kept by the chancery court since the creation of each county. The Family History Library has many county land records. For example, from Adams County the library has deeds (1780-1886), deed indexes (1798-1899), and original Spanish records (1781-96). Additional county land records can be obtained from the various county courthouses.

MAPS

Some useful maps are found in *Mississippi Maps, 1816-1873* (Jackson, Miss.: Mississippi Department of Archives and History, 1970; FHL book Q 976.2 A1 No. 1).

Mississippi maps for 1823, 1838, 1857, 1862, 1878, 1884, and 1917 are on FHL film 002083.

The University of Mississippi has a large collection of maps dating from 1900. The Mississippi Department of Archives and History has a smaller collection of maps but has useful atlases and national gazetteers.

MILITARY RECORDS

The *U.S. Military Records Research Outline* (34118) provides more information on federal military records and search strategies.

Many military records are found at the Family History Library, the National Archives, and other federal and state archives. The *United States Research Outline* provides more information about these records. For Mississippi, the following sources are also very helpful.

Colonial Wars

Several sets of records of soldiers who served under French, Spanish, and English governments are available on microfilm at the Family History Library. They are in various languages and cover the years 1612 to 1794.

War of 1812 (1812-1815)

The service records of soldiers who served in Mississippi units are on film, by regiment, at the Family History Library (FHL film 882819-40). The pension records are available at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. An index to the pensions is at the Family History Library and the National Archives. The original service records are at the National Archives.

Mexican War (1846-1848)

The service records, listed alphabetically by unit, are on film at the Family History Library (FHL film 1205446-54). The original service and pension records are available at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

Civil War (1861-1865)

Mississippi provided soldiers to both the Union and Confederate armies. Indexes to the service records for both armies are available at the Family History Library.

Union service records are at the National Archives and on film at the Family History Library (FHL film 1292659-62). Union pension records are only at the National Archives. The Family History Library has the index to the pension records.

A special census was taken in 1890 of Union veterans of the Civil War. The returns are on film at the Family History Library (FHL film 338185). An index to the Mississippi returns has been published and is available at the Family History Library.

Confederate pension and service records are at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History. Mississippi pension records for Confederate veterans are arranged alphabetically on film at the Family History Library.

Regimental sketches and rosters of Confederate troops are in John C. Rietti, *Military Annals of Mississippi.* 1895. Reprint, Spartanburg, S.C.: Reprint Company Publishers, 1976. (FHL book 976.2 M2r; film 1036087 item 8.)

World War I (1917-1918)

An index to World War I army veterans, 1917 to 1918, is available at the Family History Library (FHL film 904445-46). The original index is at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

World War I draft registration cards for men age 18 to 45 may list address, birth date, birthplace, race, nationality, citizenship, and next of kin. Not all registrants served in the war. For registration cards for Mississippi, see:

United States. Selective Service System. Mississippi, *World War I Selective Service System Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918.* National Archives Microfilm Publications, M1509. Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1987-1988. (On FHL films beginning with 1682699—.)

To find an individual's draft card, it helps to know his name and residence at the time of registration. The cards are arranged alphabetically by county, within the county by draft board, and then alphabetically by surname within each draft board.

Most counties had only one board; large cities had several. A map showing the boundaries of individual draft boards is available for most large cities. Finding an ancestor's street address in a city directory will help you in using the draft board map. There is an alphabetical list of cities that are on the map. For a copy of this map see:

United States. Selective Service System. *List of World War One Draft Board Maps.* Washington, D.C.: National Archives. (FHL film 1498803.)

NATURALIZATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Naturalization records have usually been filed in the county, circuit (county, not U.S.), or U.S. district courts. Few Mississippi counties kept separate naturalization files or books. Usually such records are found in the general records of the local courts. The Family History Library has a good collection of Mississippi court records. Other clues to application for citizenship are found in the minutes of the same courts.

If you need naturalization records after September 1906, contact a federal office of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. The National Archives—Southeast Region (Atlanta) has records of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi (1906-1943). The Mississippi Department of Archives and History has a copy of the WPA *Index to Naturalization Records Mississippi Courts, 1798-1906,* which lists over 5,000 naturalizations (FHL film 1704224).

NEWSPAPERS

The Mississippi Department of Archives and History has an extensive collection of newspapers. The Family History Library does not have copies of Mississippi newspapers, but abstracts have been published in genealogical periodicals.

A directory to help you locate Mississippi newspapers is *Mississippi Newspapers, 1805-1940: A Preliminary Union List.* (Jackson, Miss.: Mississippi Historical Records Survey, 1942; FHL book 976.2 B3h; film 1036521 item 16).

PERIODICALS

The major periodicals and magazines helpful for Mississippi research are:

Itawamba Settlers. 1981—. Published by the Itawamba Historic Society, P.O. Box 7, Mantachie, MS 38855. (FHL book 976.2982 D25i.)

Mississippi Coast Historical and Genealogical Society Quarterly. 1981—. Published by the Mississippi Coast Historical and Genealogical Society Quarterly, P.O. Box 513, Biloxi, MS 39533. (FHL book 976.21 B2m.)

Mississippi Genealogical Exchange. 1955—. Published by the Mississippi Genealogical Exchange, P.O. Box 16609, Jackson, MS 39236-0690. (FHL book 976.2 B2g.)

Mississippi Genealogy and Local History. 1969-1979. Published by Irene S. Gillis, P.O. Box 9114, Shreveport, LA 71109. (FHL book 976.2 B2m.)

Mississippi State Courier. 1984-1985. Published by Courier Productions, P.O. Box 1320, Winnfield, LA 71483-1320. (FHL book 976.2 D25m.)

The Northeast Mississippi Historical and Genealogical Society Quarterly. 1980—. Published by the Northeast Mississippi Historical and Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 434, Tupelo, MS 38802. (FHL book 976.29 D25n; fiche 6050857-65 vols. 1-9.)

PROBATE RECORDS

Probate records of Mississippi have been kept by the chancery courts or probate courts. You can obtain copies of the records by contacting the clerk's office in each county courthouse. Some probate papers are housed at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Mississippi probate records include dockets, wills, settlements, petitions, letters, guardianships, claims, and minutes. The Family History Library has copies of many Mississippi probate records, such as Hinds County inventories (1822 to 1882), bonds (1823 to 1869), wills (1870 to 1919), and executors' letters (1872 to 1919).

Transcripts of wills for 1799 to 1835 for Adams, Amite, Claiborne, Hinds, and Warren counties have been published in J. Estelle King, *Mississippi Court Records,* 1799-1835, 1936, Reprint (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1969; FHL book 976.2

S2k 1969; 1936 edition on misc. film 547551). Some probate references can also be found in Mary L. Hendrix, *Mississippi Court Records From the Files of the High Court of Errors and Appeals, 1799-1859* (Jackson, Miss.: M.L.F. Hendrix, 1950; FHL book 976.2 P2h).

VITAL RECORDS

State Records of Births and Deaths

State registration of births and deaths began in November 1912, and was generally complied with by 1921. The Family History Library does not have copies of the state records. You can obtain information by writing to:

Vital Records
State Department of Health
2423 North State Street
Jackson, MS 39216
Telephone: 601-960-7981

The current fees for obtaining copies of the state's records are listed in *Where to Write for Vital Records: Births, Deaths, Marriages, and Divorces* (Hyattsville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, March 1993; FHL book 973 v. 24wv). Copies of this booklet are at the Family History Library and at many Family History Centers.

Individuals who were born prior to 1912, or who for some reason do not have a birth certificate, can apply for a delayed certificate of birth. The State Board of Health began keeping delayed certificates of birth in 1912. Some of the records are kept at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

County Records of Births and Deaths

A few counties kept birth and death records as early as 1879. These early records were kept intermittently and are very incomplete. The Family History Library has copies of these records for Hancock, Harrison, Lauderdale, Panola, and Tallahatchie counties. The State Board of Health has early records for Harrison, Hinds, and Pike counties.

For information about county birth and death records prior to 1912, contact the local county health department. The county health departments do not usually have records of births and deaths occurring after November 1, 1912. The clerks in these offices cannot do research for genealogists. However, they can send a copy of a specific record of an individual.

State Records of Marriages

State registration of marriages began in 1926. The State Board of Health (address above) has records from 1 January 1926 to 31 July 1938 and from 1 January 1942 to the present. Records for the 1938 to 1942 interim period are available from the county circuit court office in each county.

The Department of Archives and History has an index of pre-1926 Mississippi marriages. The State Board of Health has an index to marriages (male names only) from 1926 to the present. The Family History Library does not have copies of the state records or indexes.

County Records of Marriages

Many counties began recording marriages as early as 1800. Unfortunately, only about one-half of the pre-1850 marriage records have survived. The circuit courts have the county marriage records from the earliest years to the present.

The Family History Library has microfilm copies of most existing marriage records to about 1926. For example, the library has 26 microfilms from the Adams County Circuit Clerk that include marriage records, (1802-1927), an index to white marriages, (1802-1927), and an index to African-American (designated as "colored") marriages (1866-1942).

Divorce Records

Divorce proceedings are usually kept by the chancery court in each county and are usually interfiled with other court matters. The Family History Library has microfilmed the chancery court records for most Mississippi counties.

A statewide index of divorces (male names only) from the 1920s to the present is available at the State Board of Health. This office will search the divorce index for a fee.

Inventory of Vital Records

You can learn more about the history and availability of Mississippi vital records in *Guide to Vital Statistics in Mississippi: Volume 1, Public Archives* (Jackson: Historical Records Survey, 1942; FHL book 976.2 V23h; film 1036275).

FOR FURTHER READING

Some additional information about research and records in Mississippi is in Richard Stephen Lackey, "Mississippi," *Genealogical Research: Methods and Sources,* vol. 2: 188-218 (Washington, D.C.: American Society of Genealogists, 1980; FHL book 973 D27gr).

Eichholz, Alice, ed. *Ancestry's Red Book: American State, County, and Town Sources.* Rev. ed. Salt Lake City: Ancestry, 1992. (FHL book 973 D27rb 1992; computer number 594021.) Contains bibliographies and background information on history and ethnic groups. Also contains maps and tables showing when each county was created.

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

The Family History Library welcomes additions and corrections that will improve future editions of this outline. Please send your suggestions to:

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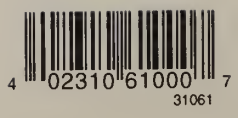
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